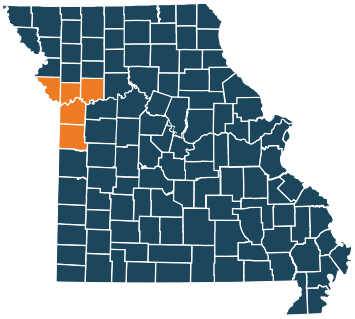


COMMUTING PROFILE
KANSAS CITY REGION
JULY 2026

Overview

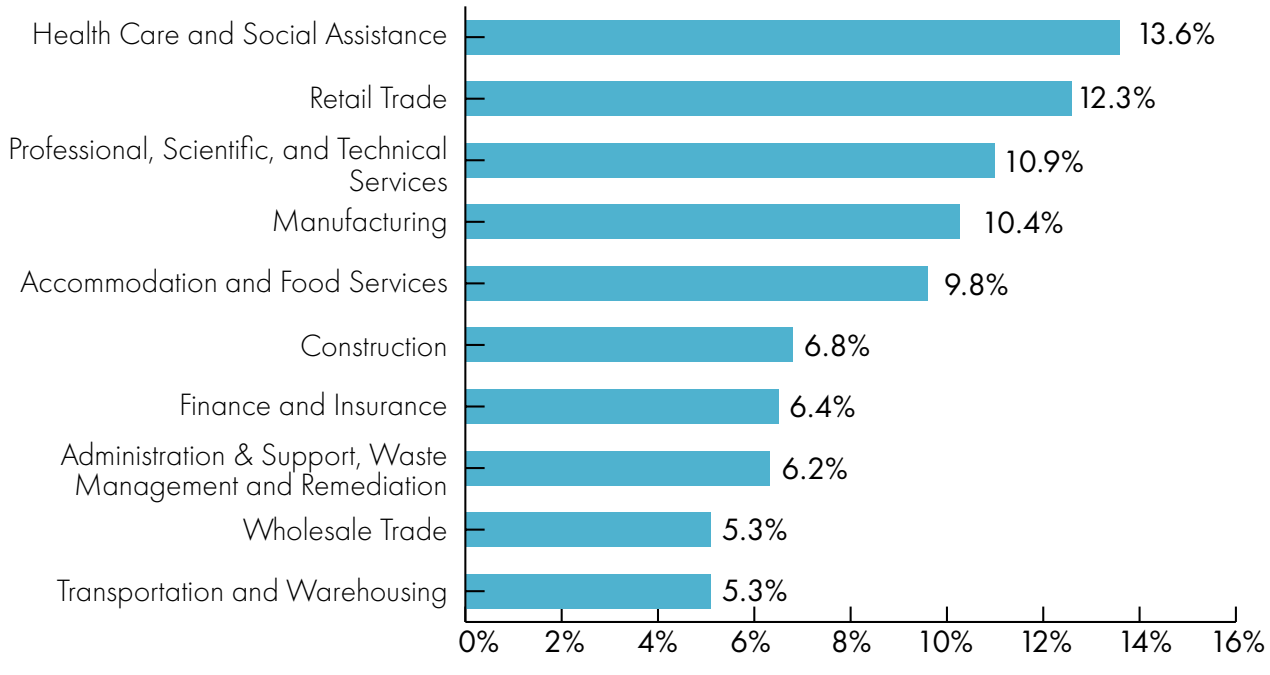
The Kansas City Workforce Development Area (WDA) consists of five counties: Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte, and Ray. In 2023, there were 481,557 total private primary jobs** in Kansas City WDA, making up 21 percent of private primary jobs in Missouri. Most workers employed in the region were aged 30 to 54 (51.9%). Workers aged 29 or younger were 25.7 percent of the workforce and 55 or older were 22.4 percent. In 2023, more than 60 percent of private primary jobs in the Kansas City WDA paid more than $3,333 per month. Of the remaining jobs, 14.6 percent paid $1,250 per month or less and 25.3 percent paid between $1,251 and $3,333 per month. In 2023, there were more men (52.4%) than women (47.6%) in the Kansas City WDA workforce employed at the private primary jobs.

In 2023, 41.9 percent of employees living in the Kansas City WDA commuted fewer than 10 miles to work, 47.4 percent commuted 10 to 50 miles to work, and 10.7 percent commuted more than 50 miles.

Industry

Healthcare and Social Assistance was the largest employing industry in the Kansas City region with 65,445 private primary jobs (13.6% of total primary private jobs in the region). *Retail Trade; Professional, Scientific and Technical Services; Manufacturing;* and *Accommodation and Food Services* were other major industry sectors having at least 9 percent of the region's employment share. Kansas City's *Manufacturing* sector employed 50,002 workers and was second after St. Louis in the state for employment in this sector. Kansas City, Independence, and Lee's Summit were the top three cities for employment in this region.

Top KC WDA Industry - Private Primary Jobs Percentage



Where the Kansas City WDA Labor Force Works and Lives

Of the 481,557 workers employed in the Kansas City WDA in 2023, 69.0 percent commuted to work within the region. The remainder (30.1%) commuted into Kansas City WDA from homes outside of the region.

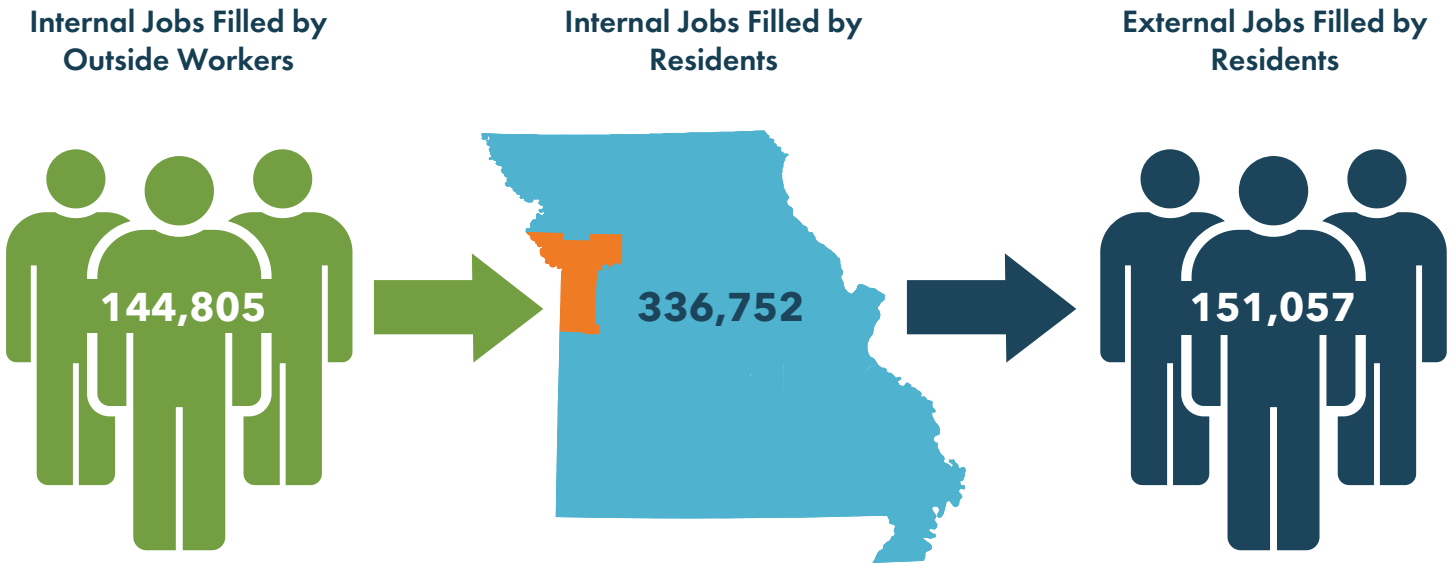
Description	2023	
	Count	Share
KC WDA Labor Market Size (Private Primary Jobs)		
Employed in the Kansas City WDA	481,557	100.0%
Living in the Kansas City WDA	487,809	101.3%
Net Job Inflow (+) or Outflow (-)	-6,252	-
In-Area Labor Force Efficiency (Private Primary Jobs)		
Living in the Kansas City WDA	487,809	100.0%
Living and Employed in the Kansas City WDA	336,752	69.0%
Living in the Kansas City WDA but Employed Outside	151,057	31.0%
In-Area Employment Efficiency (Private Primary Jobs)		
Employed in the Kansas City WDA	481,557	100.0%
Employed and Living in the Kansas City WDA	336,752	69.9%
Employed in the Kansas City WDA but Living Outside	144,805	30.1%

Of the region's residents who were in the workforce, 31 percent, or 151,057, commuted to jobs outside of the region. The Kansas City WDA attracted 144,805 workers from outside of the region. More than 336,000 Kansas City WDA residents both lived and worked in the region.

The top five counties where Kansas City WDA workers resided (in descending order) were Jackson, Clay, Johnson (Kansas), Platte, and Cass. About 15 percent of Kansas City WDA, workers lived in Kansas and commuted to Missouri for work in 2023.

Inflow/Outflow

Overall, 487,809 employees lived in the Kansas City WDA and 481,557 workers were employed in the region, resulting in a net outflow of 6,252 workers from the region.



The following table shows the worker composition for the job inflow and outflow groups as well as worker characteristics of the interior job flow. Of the 336,752 individuals who lived and worked in the region, 26.4 percent were aged 29 years or younger, 51.4 percent were aged 30 to 54 years, and 22.3 percent were aged 55 years or older. More than half (59.6%) worked in the *Services* industry.

Kansas City WDA Description	2023	
	Count	Share
Outflow Job Characteristics (Private Primary Jobs)		
External Jobs Filled by Residents	151,057	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	38,632	25.6%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	79,443	52.6%
Workers Aged 55 or older	32,982	21.8%
Workers Earning $1,250 per month or less	20,509	13.6%
Workers Earning $1,251 to $3,333 per month	35,172	23.3%
Workers Earning More than $3,333 per month	95,376	63.1%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	24,605	16.3%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	40,438	26.8%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	86,014	56.9%
Inflow Job Characteristics (Private Primary Jobs)		
Internal Jobs Filled by Outside Workers	144,805	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	35,112	24.2%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	77,015	53.2%
Workers Aged 55 or older	32,678	22.6%
Workers Earning $1,250 per month or less	18,316	12.6%
Workers Earning $1,251 to $3,333 per month	32,099	22.2%
Workers Earning More than $3,333 per month	94,390	65.2%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	26,118	18.0%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	33,563	23.2%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	85,124	58.8%
Interior Flow Job Characteristics (Private Primary Jobs)		
Internal Jobs Filled by Residents	336,752	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	88,751	26.4%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	173,007	51.4%
Workers Aged 55 or older	74,994	22.3%
Workers Earning $1,250 per month or less	51,901	15.4%
Workers Earning $1,251 to $3,333 per month	89,828	26.7%
Workers Earning More than $3,333 per month	195,023	57.9%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	58,104	17.3%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	78,027	23.2%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	200,621	59.6%

Commuter Pattern

The top five counties where Kansas City WDA workers living in the region are employed at their private primary jobs in 2023 (in descending order) were Jackson, Clay, Johnson (Kansas), Platte, and Cass. About 15 percent of Kansas City WDA workers lived in Kansas and commuted to Missouri for work.

The table below indicates that many workers commuted to another county for employment. The top five counties which Kansas City WDA residents worked outside of home county (in descending order) were Ray, Cass, Platte, Clay, and Jackson. About 20 percent of Kansas City WDA residents commuted to Kansas. All but Jackson County had more than of half of their workers commuting outside their county of residence for jobs.

Kansas City WDA	
Percent of Kansas City WDA Residents Working Outside of Home County	
Cass	**80%**
Clay	**69%**
Jackson	**45%**
Platte	**79%**
Ray	**86%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2023*), URL: https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/

**2023 is the latest year for which LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (commuting data) is available from the U.S. Census Bureau. To maintain the consistency of data in this report, all relevant data used is also from 2023, although later data for some data points was available.*

LEHD data infrastructure tracks jobs as its primary unit instead of people. As such, the system naturally captures more than one job per person when available in the data. The **dominant (or primary) job for an individual is defined as the job that earned the individual the most money. Constructed this way, ***the number of primary jobs should be equal to the number of workers.***

This report was prepared by the staff of the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC). All data in this report was current at the time of publication and is subject to revision. This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The product was created by the recipient and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The U.S. Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership. This product is copyrighted by the institution that created it. Internal use by an organization and/or personal use by an individual for non-commercial purposes is permissible. All other uses require the prior authorization of the copyright owner.